be clear from the report which I have placed before you for your perusal.

Agricultural School.—The Agricultural School could not be opened earlier for want of proper staff. As soon as we got a sufficient number of men, the school was opened. We have sent out 20 trained men, and we are now giving instruction to another batch of 20. In this connection, I have to bring to the notice of this House the co-operation of the Education Department with the Agricultural Department, and this is entirely due to the enthusiasm of the present Director of Public Instruction in the spread of Agricultural education in the State.

The Cocoanut Station.—This Farm which has become the subject of so much criticism in this House was opened with a view to solve the several problems connected with cocoanuts. The Hon'ble Member for the South Ezhuva constituency remarked that he knows everything about cocoanuts. I must, certainly, congratulate him on his wide knowledge about cocoanuts.

Mr. A. B. SALEM (*Jews*).

I think there is some personal reflection in that.

President.—There is no reflection. It is complimentary. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. I. RAMAN MENON (*Superintendent of Agriculture and Panchayats*).

Personally, I feel we have yet to learn a lot. We have, for a long time, been dreaming of our glorious past, and I feel it is high time to wake up to realise the actual situation. While the average out-turn of nuts per tree per year is between 50 and 100 in some well-managed estates in other countries, I doubt very much if the average of the State is anything above 30. There were nearly 1,400 trees in the Cocoanut Station, out of which nearly 900 were old and useless. The whole estate had to be laid out and replanted. There are now in the estate not more than 500 bearing trees. 630 trees have been planted, and some portion of the estate has to be laid out and planted. The expenditure proposed for the Cocoanut Station thus includes the cost of maintaining the grown-up trees as well as the cost required for maintaining the 630 trees planted

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and also the amount required for laying out and planting up the remaining area. I think I have made matters clear.

One of the Hon'ble Members remarked that the department has got 8 Inspectors, and that they are not going about the rural areas. We have only three Inspectors now. The budget shows only the sanctioned strength. We have sent a few men for training, the idea being that we might recruit men from the State, instead of going in for outside people.

Till about three years ago, the department had only a very limited number of people, one of whom had to be permanently stationed in the Farm, and the remaining two were asked to do district work. One of the Hon'ble Members said that no replies were received to references made to the department. I submit that I cannot remember a single case in which a reply was not given. To the remark that proper advice was not given for checking some paddy-pest, I shall refer to it presently in this reply.

Some reference has been made to the prevailing cocoanut-pest. This insect-pest was noticed in some cocoanut gardens of the Cochin-Kanayannur Taluk in Meenam last. A general circular was then issued. This circular contains instructions about the supply of information to the department, so that the department may be enabled to take prompt steps in the matter.

Soon afterwards, the attack by "*Nephantis Serinopa*" (the insect now attacking cocoanut leaves) was reported from a few other places. The officers of the department proceeded to these places immediately and took the remedial measures. For some time the pest was fairly under control.

When the heavy rains commenced, the pest rapidly spread, and the officers of the department tried their best to persuade garden owners to adopt methods suggested by us. When persuasion failed to produce the desired effect, I had to move the Government to put the Pest Regulation in force. Notices under the Regulation have been issued. The work of checking the spread of the pest is progressing satisfactorily in all the centres.

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In this connection, it is submitted that *Nephantis Serinopa* was first reported as doing serious ravages near Quilon in 1918. It spread northwards. In 1921 it was by an accident introduced to Mangalore along with some cocoanut seedlings sent from Kayankulam.

The latest enquiries show that the insect got a hold in Vendurutti, most probably after the floods of last year, and now, I find that it has spread to a number of places in the Cochin-Kanayannur Taluk; there is every chance of its further spread unless very vigorous measures are taken, namely, by cutting the affected leaves and by burning them, and by stopping all transport of affected leaves from place to place. The method suggested by the department is the safest and the most practicable, for it is not within practical politics to spray such a large number of trees with the ordinary one gallon Pressure Sprayers. Besides, there is also very great danger in spraying the trees with a solution of lead arsenate on a large scale, since lead arsenate is a strong poison to animals.

In the case of attacks by insects and diseases, timely information should be supplied. The owners of gardens should visit their gardens now and then and see if anything goes wrong. In this connection, I regret very much to observe that the Hon'ble Members representing Landlords and the Vadakkancheri constituency, while strongly condemning the Agricultural Department, ignored to note the advantages derived by thousands of people by spraying for the arecanut disease. In 1090, when I took charge of the department, there was hardly any spraying operation going on in these places. While I managed to undertake spraying operations in Mundur and other places, the people of Kunnamkulam refused to have their gardens sprayed. Once I specially wrote to Mr. Panakkal Pathappan and requested his co-operation in the matter. It did not, however, take long for the work to become popular. It will be observed from the statement of work done by the department that as many as 450 spraying machines were sold to the people during the last ten years, and even now I have placed an order with Messrs. Volkart Bros., Madras, for another consignment of 50 machines, for which I have registered applications from ryots. I think it was in 1098 or so that the Deputy Director of

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Agriculture, Malabar, visited Chalisseri, a village on the borders of the Talappalli Taluk and also Kunnamkulam. They saw me at Trichur and congratulated me on the splendid arrangements made within the State for combating the *Mahali* disease of arecanut trees.

One of the Hon'ble Members was making rather sweeping remarks about the Farm, and saying that the Farm was selling *vendai* and brinjals. The English word for *vendai* is "Lady's finger". Both are food crops. I have not, so far as my knowledge of Natural Science goes, come across with any hint anywhere of any attempt to revise the classification of the vegetable kingdom and to treat any particular group of plants as "depressed classes." Ten years ago, i. e., before the Farm was opened, the type of *vendai* fruit usually eaten by the people was the one which had a number of spines. As many as 170 packets of seeds were sold from the Farm, besides the issue of samples in small lots to the ryots as well as to schools in several parts of the State. The Farm has also sold, till now, nearly 18,000 seedlings of brinjals.

Avenues.—During the last ten years, nearly 40,000 avenue trees were planted, including over a thousand cocoanut plants. The total expenditure incurred is Rs. 67,376-6-7. Out of the 40,000 planted, 30,000 may be considered to have established themselves. Thus the average cost per plant is just over Rs. 2. This is cheap enough, and I think the work cannot be done cheaper.

The income from avenue trees rose from Rs. 1,397—3—7 to Rs. 3,537—13—7 in 1099. This is steadily going up.

In conclusion, I would earnestly request the members of this House to carefully consider our present economic condition. You will find that no progress can be achieved in any department of human activities without utilising up-to-date scientific knowledge. When, after a few years, we get a number of the new type of men possessing knowledge in Agriculture and allied industries, the prejudice towards the Agricultural Department will vanish, and better co-operation from the educated class wil be possible. Till then, the officers of the Agricultural Department here, as well as

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